

That which is claimed:

1. A method for making an absorbent composite from a continuous tow comprising the steps of:

spreading a crimped tow;

de-registering the crimped tow;

shielding said tow, while de-registering, from contaminants;

shaping the de-registered tow; and

distributing a particulate onto the shaped tow.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein shielding said tow further comprises encasing the tow during de-registering.

3. The method of Claim 2 wherein encasing the tow during de-registering comprises applying a positive pressure around the tow during de-registering.

4. The method of Claim 5 wherein the positive pressure being in the range of 0.1 to 1.0 psig.

5. The method of Claim 1 further comprising shaping the de-registered tow to a substantially rectangular cross-section.

6. The method of Claim 1 further comprising applying a liquid to the tow.

7. An apparatus for making an absorbent composite from a continuous tow comprising:

means for spreading a crimped tow;

means for de-registering the crimped tow;

means for shielding said tow, while de-registering, from contaminants;

means for shaping the de-registered tow; and

means for distributing a particulate onto the shaped tow.

8. The apparatus of Claim 7 wherein the means for shielding said tow further comprises means for encasing the tow during de-registering.

9. The apparatus of Claim 8 wherein the means for encasing comprising devices selected from the group consisting of cabinets, curtains, air curtains, and wire cages.

10. The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein the means for encasing comprising a cabinet.

11. The apparatus of Claim 7 wherein the means for encasing the tow during de-registering comprises means for applying a positive pressure around the tow during de-registering.

13. The apparatus of Claim 11 wherein the positive pressure being in the range of 0.1 to 1.0 psig.

14. The apparatus of Claim 7 further comprising means for shaping the de-registered tow to a substantially rectangular cross-section.

15. The apparatus of Claim 7 further comprising means for applying a liquid to the tow.